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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part IV)

Rapporteur: Mr. Djamel MOKTEFI (Algeria)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The previous recommendations made by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly under agenda item 116 appear in the report of the Committee contained in documents A/52/744 and Add.1 and 2.

2. The Fifth Committee resumed its consideration of the item at its 60th, 61st and 68th meetings, on 11, 12 and 29 May 1998. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's further consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/52/SR.60, 61 and 68).

3. In addition to the documents listed in A/52/744 and Add.1 and 2, the Committee had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the utilization of the Development Account (A/52/848) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/52/894).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.5/52/L.56

4. At the 68th meeting, on 29 May, the representative of Argentina and coordinator of the informal consultations on item 116, on behalf of the Chairman, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Development Account" (A/C.5/52/L.56) and orally revised it by replacing operative paragraph 6, which had read:

> "6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals on the use of the funds available under a new section 34 of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 to be submitted as soon as possible and not later than 31 July 1998, to the relevant intergovernmental bodies",

by the following text:

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals on the use of the funds available in section 34 of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 to the relevant intergovernmental bodies, as soon as possible and not later than 31 July 1998".

5. At the same meeting, the representative of Cameroon orally amended the draft resolution by replacing the words "documents A/52/758 and A/52/848" by the words "the report of the Secretary-General (A/52/758) and the note by the Secretary-General (A/52/848)" in operative paragraph 1.

6. Also at the same meeting, the representative of Egypt orally amended the draft resolution by inserting the words "and its activities" after the words "Development Account" in operative paragraph 4 (c).

7. Also at its 68th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/52/L.56, as orally revised and amended, without a vote (see para. 8).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

8. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Development Account

The General Assembly,

Recalling paragraph 24 of its resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997,

Recalling also its decision 52/477 of 6 May 1998,

Recalling further its resolutions 52/220 and 52/221 of 22 December 1997,

Having before it the report of the Secretary-General on the reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs,[1] and having considered the note by the Secretary-General on the utilization of the Development Account[2] and the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon,[3]

1. Regrets that the quality of the report of the Secretary-General[1] and the note by the Secretary-General[2] did not fully respond to the requirements of resolution 52/12 B and did not provide substantive information and clear direction to enable it to take a final decision at this time, and also regrets

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[1] A/52/758.

[2] A/52/848.

[3] A/52/7/Add.10 and A/52/894.

the non-issuance of the document on the exact use of the $13 million already allocated to the Development Account;

2. Emphasizes that efficiency measures should not adversely affect the full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities;

3. Emphasizes also that the efficiency measures should not lead to a process of budgetary reduction and should not result in the involuntary separation of staff;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly no later than 31 July 1998, at the third part of its resumed fifty-second session, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the detailed report on the sustainability of the Development Account, the modalities of its implementation, the specific purposes and the associated performance criteria for the use of resources requested in its resolution 52/12 B and decision 52/477, and to include in the report the following elements:

(a) Identification of the types and areas of efficiency measures to be implemented throughout the Secretariat and estimates of the amounts and percentages of the possible savings to be achieved;

(b) An analysis of the impact of such efficiency measures on the staffing levels of the Organization and on the delivery of mandated programmes and activities;

(c) The sustainability of the Development Account and its activities beyond the year 2003;

(d) Specific proposals on the programmatic objectives and direction of the Development Account, in accordance with the priorities set out in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, taking into consideration the complementarity of the activities of the Development Account with other relevant sections of the programme budget;

5. Notes that the amount of $200 million suggested by the Secretary-General is an indicative target to fund the Development Account and that no time-frame should be specified for reaching that target;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals on the use of the funds available in section 34 of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 to the relevant intergovernmental bodies, as soon as possible and not later than 31 July 1998;

7. Decides to return to the issues related to the Development Account for further consideration and appropriate action, based on the detailed report referred to in paragraph 4 above, at the third part of its resumed fifty-second session.